



PRESS RELEASE

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BRANON CONVICTED IN CONSPIRACY TO MURDER ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL BILLIE A. ROSEN

A federal jury convicted 40 year old Mark David Branon, of San Diego of Use of a Firearm in a Crime of violence in the attempted murder of an Assistant State Attorney General. Branon, facing a jury trial in Arizona State court, scheduled for April 8, 2002, surmised that if the prosecutor was dead, his case wouldn't be prosecuted. While out on a state bond of 1.7 million dollars, Branon conspired to kill his former attorney, who agreed to testify against him as well as the Assistant Attorney General. The U.S. Attorney's Office subsequently indicted Branon and he has been held in federal custody since August 2, 2002. The jury also convicted Branon for engaging in a Continuing Criminal Enterprise, in which the drug conspiracy involving multi-ton quantities of marijuana, and his criminal marijuana enterprise made millions of dollars. He was also convicted of controlling 2 residences in Scottsdale, Arizona as "stash houses" where the marijuana was stored. In addition, Branon was convicted of using a firearm in a violent crime, being a felon in possession of a firearm and being in possession of a firearm with an obliterated serial number. The jury found the defendant conspired with others to obtain a weapon which was fitted with a silencer and had an obliterated serial number. The jury further found a gun was discharged in the attempted murder of the State of Arizona Assistant Attorney General responsible for the state court prosecution. On March 19, 2002 3

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gunshots were fired through the Assistant Attorney General's window of her home. One of the rounds struck a family member one inch from his heart causing non-fatal injuries. Branon faces a prison terms of 780 months to life. Assistant United States Attorney Steven P. Logan was quoted as saying, "if you engage in drug trafficking and you think that if you kill the prosecutor your case will vanish, you're wrong." Logan further stated that, "both members of law enforcement and prosecutors in the District of Arizona will not be held hostage nor intimidated." "Not only is this conviction vindication, it also sends a message that law enforcement and prosecutors refuse to back down to the criminal element." The investigation was conducted by the Scottsdale Police Department, Glendale Police Department with the assistance of the Drug Enforcement Administration in both Phoenix and San Diego.

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